

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 IO-13 HA-05
/147 W

-----090165 202014Z /70

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2694
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 5237

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG PBOR IS EG
SUBJ: ISRAELI OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION IN NORTHERN SINAI

REFS: (A) STATE 93822, (B) TEL AVIV 1763, (C) TEL AVIV 4662

1. DIRGEN MINENERGY VARDI TOLD EMBOFF APRIL 18 THAT
GOI HAS NO CONFIRMED OIL FINDS IN NORTHERN SINAI
AND ONLY ONE GAS FIND AT SADOT FIELD. BASED ON SADOT 1
ALONE (REF B), RESERVES WERE ESTIMATED AT 10 TO 20
BILLION CUBIC FEET (BCF). CURRENT TESTING OF
SADOT 2 HAS INCREASED THIS ESTIMATE TO A MINIMUM OF
30 BCF. PRODUCTION WILL BEGIN AS SOON AS PIPELINES
ARE LAID, WHICH VARDI SAYS WILL TAKE MANY MONTHS.

2. VARDI SAID THAT NO SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF GAS
OR OIL HAVE BEEN FOUND AT PELUSION, GOFER, SLAV OR
DIKLA (REF B). HOWEVER, DRILLERS FOUND SIGNS OF
SULFUR AT DIKLA IN SEMAS RANGING FROM TWO TO POSSIBLY
FIFTEEN METERS THICK AT A DEPTH OF 400 METERS. MANY
MONTHS WILL BE NEEDED TO ASSESS THE QUALITY AND
QUANTITY OF THIS SULFUR INDICATION.

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3. IN GULF OF SUEZ, VARDI SAID THAT THE NEXT AREA FOR
EXPLORATION WILL BE NORTH OF ALMA FIELD AT A LOCATION
NOT YET DETERMINED. HE SAID THAT PRODUCTION FROM ALMA
FIELD CONTINUES AT ABOUT 12,000 BBL PER DAY. HE
NOTED THAT NEPTUNE OIL CO., IN ITS MARCH 31 ANNUAL RE-
PORT, HAD IDENTIFIED ITSELF (OR ITS MAJORITY OWNER) AS

SUPERIOR OIL CO. OF HOUSTON.

4. COMMENT: DUE TO MODEST LEVEL OF GAS FOUND IN THE SADOT FIELD, WE DOUBT THAT IT WILL LEAVE A MAJOR IMPACT ON ISRAEL'S NEGOTIATING POSTURE. HOWEVER, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THE SADOT FIELD IS SITUATED AMONG THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN THE RAFAH APPROACHES. SHOULD THERE BE A MAJOR GAS STRIKE IN THIS AREA, WE WOULD EXPECT IT TO STRENGTHEN ISRAELI RESOLVE TO RETAIN SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE AREA. ANY MAJOR GAS OR OIL FIND FARTHER WEST (PELUSION, GOFER, SLAV) WOULD PROBABLY BE TREATED BY GOI IN THE SAME WAY AS GULF OF SUEZ OIL, I.E., ISRAEL MIGHT CLAIM A RIGHT TO SHARE THE RESOURCES BECAUSE OF ISRAELI DISCOVERY AND EXPLOITATION EFFORTS, EVEN THOUGH NOT CLAIMING SOVEREIGNTY (SEE PARA 2, REF C). LEWIS

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Message Attributes

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